Al-Hidaya
No 4

ME'RAJ

All Praise to Allah, who took Hazrat Muhammad (S.A.W.), His last Rasul, physically to the Heavens and to the Sahabah (R.A.) who testified the truth.

This leaflet is a summary of a detailed booklet by Sheikhul Hadith Hazrat Moulana Fazlur Rehman Saheb of Darul Uloom Islamia, Azaadville. May Allah grant him long life.

INTRODUCTION

Any change or deviation, be it in the slightest form, to the Deen revealed fourteen hundred years ago is not tolerated. It is due to the sanad (the un-interrupted chain of authorities on which a narration is based) that our Deen has been preserved in it's pristine purity.

However, despite the preservation of the Deen by means of the sanad, many baseless beliefs and unfounded practices have cropped up among the Muslims.

Me'raj is one such aspect wherein numerous narrations have found their way, many without proper transmission or sanad.

ISRAA AND ME'RAJ

The ascension of Nabi (S.A.W.) is generally classified in two parts: "Israa and Me'raj." Israa literally means to travel by night. This refers to the journey of Nabi (S.A.W.) from Makkah to Masjidul Aqsa in Jerusalem. Me'raj refers to the ascension of Nabi (S.A.W.) from Masjidul Aqsa to the heavens and beyond. The Israa is clearly mentioned in Surah Bani Israel: "Glorified be He who carried His servant by day from the Inviolable Place of Worship (Makkah) to the far distant Place of Worship (Jerusalem)."

The Me'raj of Nabi (S.A.W.) has been narrated in authentic Ahaadith. Ibne

Katheer (R.A.) has recorded the incident of Me'raj from twenty five Sahabah (R.A.) [Tafseer i Ibne Katheer, vol. 1, pg. 3). The person who rejects the Me'raj of Nabi (S.A.W.) though he cannot be termed a Kaafir, is definitely a Faasiq (A flagrant violator of the Shari'ah).

The Me'raj of Nabi (S.A.W.) was a physical one i.e. with body and soul. This can be clearly ascertained from the Qur'aan when Allah says:
"Glorified be He who carried His servant by night." (Surah Bani Israel, verse 1)

Here the word "Abd" (servant) is used. This Arabic word does definitely not mean soul. It is the physical living being that is "Abd".

Ibne Abbas Radhiallahu anh has stated clearly that the Me'raj was a physical one. (Sahih Bukhari, vol. 2, pg. 686)

WHEN DID THE ME'RAJ OCCUR?

If the general public was asked: "When did the Me'raj occur?" Most people would unhesitatingly answer "the 27th Rajab)". It would sound strange if one were to suggest that Me'raj probably occurred on some other date. In order to establish this, we would have to refer to the original sources for guidance. We definitely cannot rely on what has become famous nowadays among the people.

DIFFERENCE OF OPINION

The Muarrikheen (historians) have greatly differed with regard to the date of Me'raj. Hafiz Ibn Hajar (R.A.) has quoted over ten different dates which the Ulama and historians have regarded as the possible date of Me'raj. [Fathul - Baree, vol. 7, pg. 203]

Regarding the Me'raj, Allama Aini (R.A.) says:
"It has been said that it (Me'raj) took place a year before Hijra in the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal. This is the view of the majority to such an extent that Ibn Hazm (R.A.) has exaggerated (in this matter) and recorded a consensus of opinion (that Me'raj took place in Rabi-ul-Awwal). [Umdatul Qaree, vol. 17, pg. 20]

To quote a last view, one of the renown latter day Ulama, Sheikh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlawi (R.A.) writes:

"Take note that it has become famous among the people of the Arab Lands that the Me'raj of Nabi (S.A.W.) took place on the 27th Rajab... (However) it has been stated that this view is incorrect. The correct view is that Me'raj occurred on the 17th of Ramadaan or the 17th of Rabi-ul-Awwal in the twelfth year of the prophethood." [Ma Thabata Bis Sunnah. pg. 191]

The extreme difference of opinion regarding the date of Me'raj clearly indicates that the Sahabah (R.A.) did not observe the occasion of Me'raj. It is inconceivable that such a difference of opinion could have occurred if the Sahabah (R.A.) had "celebrated" the night of Me'raj or observed its annual Shar'i significance in any way whatsoever. Hence, to regard the 27th of Rajab as being definitely the night of Me'raj is erroneous. The crux of the matter is simply this: It is impossible to state conclusively that Me'raj occured on any particular date.

THE INCIDENT OF ME'RAJ

Prior to his ascent to the heavens, Nabi (S.A.W.) was taken to Baitul Muqaddis (Masjidul Aqsa). At Baitul Muqaddus, he met a group of Ambiya (A.S.) among whom were Ibrahim, Moosa, and Eesa (A.S.). Thereafter he led the Salaat with the Ambiya (A.S.) as his Muqtadies (followers behind the imaam). [Al Bidaya wan Nihaya, part 3, vol. 2, pg. 109]

Did Nabi (S.A.W.) meet Allah Ta'aala?

Yes, Nabi (S.A.W.) did meet Allah Ta'aala.

The majority of the Muhadditheen and Ulama are of the opinion that Nabi (S.A.W.) did meet Allah Ta'aala on the night of Me'raj. Hazrat Ibn Abbas (R.A.) is of this opinion. [As-Shifa of Qazee Ayyaaz, vol. 1, pg. 195 - 202]

TASHAHHUD AND ME'RAJ

The tashahhud (generally known as the Attahyyiat) that is recited in Salaat is well known to one and all. The origin of it is generally attributed to the

night of Me'raj in the sense that it is believed that the words we recite in tashahhud are in fact an enactment of a conversation occurring on that night.

This incident is also recorded in many other books. Allama Shah Anwar Kashmiri (R.A.) says:
"I did not find the sanad (chain of narrators) of this narration. This is also recorded in Rawdul-Unf. [Arfus-shazee, vol. 1, pg. 70]

Allama Yusuf Binnori (R.A.) too could not find any sanad for this narration. Hence after quoting the words of Allama Kashmiri (R.A.), he cited a few other books wherein this narration is quoted but he made no mention of any sanad. [Ma'arifus-sunan, vol. 3, pg. 86]

The journey of Me'raj, wherein Salaat was made obligatory, was a physical one.

FASTING IN THE MONTH OF RAJAB

With regards to fasting in the month of Rajab, no authentic hadith can be found wherein any special virtue or significance has been narrated. However we find that in a new fabricated and certain extremely weak Ahaadith some virtues are mentioned for fasting in Rajab. Allama Suyuti (R.A.) has recorded several such Ahaadith and pointed out their weaknesses.

Furthermore, to regard something optional as Sunnah is in reality attributing something to Nabi (S.A.W.) which he did not say. This is indeed a very serious crime. Such a person falls within the purview of the Hadith:

"He who intentionally speaks a lie against me must build his abode in the fire of Hell." [Muslim, vol. 1, pg. 77]

Hence it is imperative that we heed to these aspects and act accordingly.

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